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# Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In the News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of New Sleuths

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# Bet You Missed It

## Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

Column Editor: **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

*Editor's Note:* Hey, are y'all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to *Against the Grain's* attention ... send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We're listening! — **KS**

### LITERARY STAPLES

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

The Lane cake is featured in **Harper Lee's** *To Kill a Mockingbird*. **Scout** says "it's loaded with shinny" which is likkah. For the filling, cook the bourbon along with the butter, sugar and egg yolks yielding a thickened cream. No need for an after-dinner drink.

See — **Nick Malgieri**, "Sweet and Southern," *Savueur*, June/July 2011, p.18.

### BACKPACKER'S BIBLE

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

**Tony Wheeler** stays in five-star hotels when he travels because he co-created *Lonely Planet* and is very rich. What began as a hand-stapled book written on a kitchen table has grown to books, a magazine, a website, TV programs and digital guides.

**Tony** and his wife, both Australians, met on a London bench in 1970. They set off on a trip through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and SE Asia, ending up back home with 27 cents in their pockets. They wrote a guide for cheap travel that took off in a market without competition. Now Websites have aggressively challenged them, but they still sell strongly and they have iPhone apps.

See — **Amy Yee**, "Lonely Planet's Ambassador," *The Wall Street Journal*, April, 26, 2011, p.D5.

### COMMUNAL JOY IN WORKERS' PARADISE

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

*Having just returned from the wildly successful 13th Fiesole Retreat in St. Pete, Russia, this caught my eye.*

**Joseph Brodsky**, Soviet dissident poet, was denounced as a parasite, confined to a mental clinic, then exiled to an obscure town. Later he got out of the USSR, became a heavy-weight in the NY literary establishment, **Nobel Prize** for lit, then **Poet Laureate** of the USA.

The happiest time he had in Russia was in exile because he had his own room where he could shut the door against the world. Before that he had lived in the unbelievably squalid *kommunalka* or communal apartments. One room for an entire family. One toilet shared with multiple families. No bath. Common kitchen. Lice, filth, stench, constant bickering and informing on one another.

See — **Keith Gessen**, "The Gift," *The New Yorker*, May 23, 2011, p.77.

### Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

#### Preconferences and Vendor Showcase    Main Conference

2011 Conference	2 November	3-5 November
2012 Conference	7 November	8-10 November
2013 Conference	6 November	7-9 November
2014 Conference	5 November	6-8 November

### MISSING A BOOK?

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Want a rare book? Here are five top go-to names: **BOOKEDUPAC.COM** — **Larry McMurtry** in Archer, TX; **PETERHARRINGTON.CO.UK** in Chelsea; **MAGGS.COM** also in London in uber-ritzy Berkeley Sq.; **BAUMANRAREBOOKS.COM** posh and wood lined on Madison Ave. NYC; **RANDALLHOUSERAREBOOKS.COM** in Santa Barbara in an 1825 adobe hacienda.

See — **Finn-Olaf Jones**, "Page Turners," *Forbes*, April 25, 2011, p.61.

### PAY TO PLAY

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

**Mark Pincus** was educated at **Penn** and **Harvard B-School**, but was bored to death by the standard i-banking life. Plus he had trouble with authority and dress codes. So he switched to media where he bounced between this and that until finally he created Zynga. And is now a billionaire from FarmVille and CityVille with more than 250 million players a month, all of whom pay him to create a digital world. And are punished by their crops wilting if they don't come back to play every month.

See — **Vanessa Grigoriadis**, "Ol' Mark Pincus Had a Farm," *Vanity Fair*, June, 2011, p.128.

### BOGUS LIT

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

In 1960, **John Steinbeck** took an alleged epic circular trip around America with his poodle Charley meeting emblematic American types. The resulting book was a huge bestseller and is still "revered as a mid-century document on the American soul."

Using letters, diaries, and the first draft of *Travels With Charley*, **Bill Steigerwald** has exposed the whole thing as a big hoax. Places where Steinbeck claimed to have camped and met eccentric characters were nonexistent or impossible due to diary accounts of nights in luxury motels far away.

The author began this innocently as a **Steinbeck** fan, but as he began digging, the characters seemed false. New England farmers seemed like "a cross between **Adlai Stevenson** and **Descartes**." As he dug still deeper, he found **Steinbeck** was never without his wife and never camped out like a hobo. Farms and folk he described never existed.

**Steinbeck** was in poor health, desperate to get a book done for Viking, and just made it all up. He even dropped hints that it wasn't real journalism.

See — **Bill Steigerwald**, "Sorry Charley," *Reason*, April, 2011; *travelswithoutcharley2010.com*.

